



Ontario
Ministry of
Labour

Occupational
Health and Safety
Division

Introduction to the Occupational Health and Safety Division

Governance
Regulation

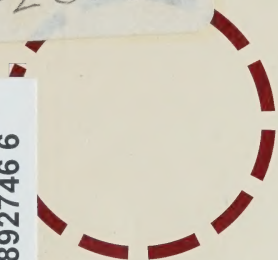
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The Report of the Royal Commission on the Health and Safety of Workers in Mines, June 1976, recommended significant and sweeping changes in the general pattern of occupational health and safety programs throughout the entire spectrum of industrial activities in Ontario.

The overriding philosophy of the recommendations is stated in this concluding statement by the Chairman, Dr. James Ham.

“The acceptable levels of risks at work and in life-style are being redefined by society. It is essential that this process be marked by a higher measure of openness than has hitherto characterized government and industrial policy.

“Openness, contributive participation by workers and thorough accountability can re-establish the self-regulatory character of the internal responsibility system at the company level as the key to the control of risks at work in a technologically complex future.”

Organization

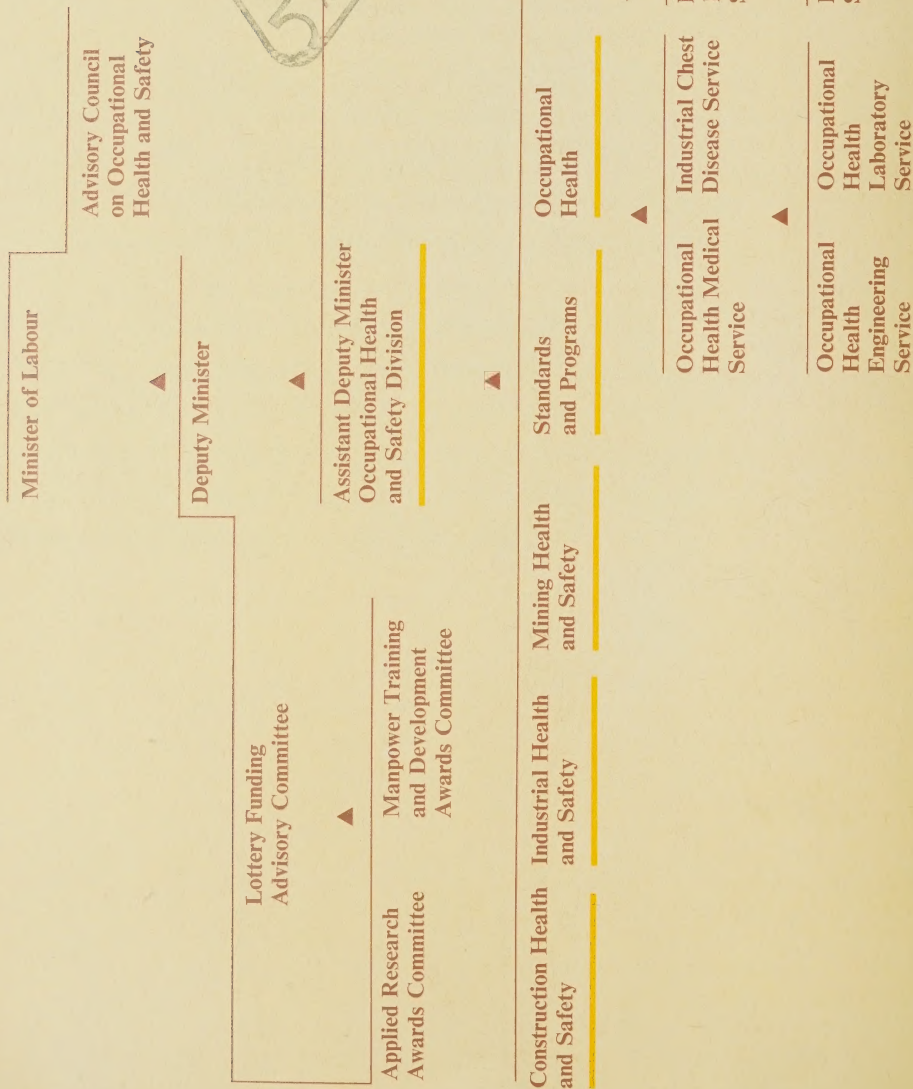
The division came into being in early 1977 on the recommendation of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Health and Safety of Workers in Mines (The Ham Report):

“That an Occupational Health and Safety Authority, encompassing the Mines Engineering and Inspection Branch, the corresponding branches under The Industrial Safety Act and The Construction Safety Act, and the Occupational Health and Safety Branch, be established in the Ministry of Labour under an assistant deputy minister.”

The Mines Engineering Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Occupational Health Protection Branch of the Ministry of Health were transferred to the Ministry of Labour, and together with the Construction Safety Branch, the Industrial Safety Branch and Staff Branch, constituted the new Occupational Health and Safety Division.

The Division has been restructured to enable efficient operation of its programs.

Organization Diagram



Occupational Health and Safety Division

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C. Rodney May, M.D., F.R.C.P.(C), D.I.H.
Assistant Deputy Minister

Prevention of illness and injury is at the heart of the Division's activities. 'Openness', 'worker participation' and 'internal responsibility systems', as expressed by Dr. Ham, are key characteristics of our programs and activities. This philosophy is implicit in our six-part approach to promoting a safe and healthy workplace.

We set the legislative framework to prevent exposure of workers to health and safety hazards. Now, for the first time, all occupational health and safety legislation has been proposed as a single act. The Occupational Health and Safety Act 1977 (Bill 70) places emphasis on the need to protect workers from both health and safety hazards in the workplace and on worker participation through provisions for joint labour-management health and safety committees and the appointment of health and safety worker representatives.

We seek co-operation from employers and employees in complying with the legislation through auditing, and enforce it if necessary through inspection. The Construction, Industrial and Mining Health and Safety Branches strongly encourage the establishment of Internal Responsibility Systems, a program of management and labour co-operation to monitor hazards and prevent on-the-job injuries, accidents, diseases and fatalities. The inspection force of these line branches audits the procedures of the Internal Responsibility Systems and the performance of worker representatives and joint labour-management health and safety committees to ensure compliance with the legislation.

The Construction, Industrial and Mining Health and Safety Branches provide advisory and consultative services to assist companies and unions in establishing their health and safety programs. The Occupational Health Branch and the Special Studies and Services Branch provide clinical and scientific support. Services include medical surveillance of workers in high risk areas, nursing consultants, chest x-rays, monitoring of the workplace environment, radiation protection and continuing studies on the health effects of occupational exposure to chemical and physical agents.

We monitor technological innovations to reduce any adverse impact on the health and safety of workers. Plans for new buildings, plants, mines and related processes and equipment are reviewed in consultation with the companies in an attempt to forestall possible

hazards which may be avoided with proper planning. This is also the best time to develop an Internal Responsibility System. It can be built into the operation right from the beginning. Testing is conducted on new equipment and procedures to ensure their safety, and changes may be made in the legislation to guard against possible hazards.

We evaluate the causes and effects of injuries and disease. Specific worker groups are studied so that potential health or safety hazards can be identified before they occur. Periodic checks are made of workers in potentially dangerous areas. All accidents resulting in fatalities, serious injuries or "near misses" are investigated, and recommendations made for preventive measures against similar incidents in the future.

We assist in training and up-grading the skills of workers and supervisors in occupational health and safety. Programs have been initiated to increase worker skills and knowledge for safer job performance, and to train workers to identify and control hazards in preparation for their possible role as worker representatives.

The overall structure of the Division continues to reflect the fundamental changes begun in 1977. The traditional inspection and enforcement type of activity is being supplemented by programs designed to prevent hazards and their effects. We assist industry and occupational groups to identify problems, develop programs to meet their needs, introduce co-operative monitoring systems and ensure compliance with realistic and acceptable standards in both health and safety matters.

Following are some of the particular activities of each of the branches.

Keith Cleverdon, P.Eng.
Director

There are many situations in which a construction worker may be exposed to a wide variety of health and safety hazards. Buildings go through many stages, from construction, alteration and repair to final demolition, involving potential hazards from falls, falling objects, machinery, dusts and noxious fumes. Shafts and tunnels present an additional problem when work is done under compressed air. The construction of highways, railways, sewers and watermains each carries its own hazards. A construction worker anywhere may be exposed to danger from solids, liquids, gases or electrical energy.

The Construction Health and Safety Branch encourages labour and management to prevent hazards and consequent personal damage by auditing their own health and safety programs. They will be the best judge of the problems associated with a particular site. The Branch can offer advice on the establishment of these programs, based on experience gained from past investigations.

Inspections are carried out at approximately 9,000 construction sites which are underway each year, where the projects are valued at \$25,000 or more, including housing, high rise buildings, factories, roads, tunnels and trenches.

Industrial Health and Safety Branch

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Jim McNair, P.Eng.
Director

Accidents and personal injuries have unfortunately always been part of industrial activity. Some diseases have been known to be caused by substances used in industrial processes. The increasing use of toxic chemicals and the introduction of other agents in industry and logging has to be monitored carefully to avoid possible hazards to workers.

The Industrial Health and Safety Branch is responsible for programs to reduce the incidence of work-related illness or injury in about 70,000 workplaces in Ontario.

The Branch encourages employers and employees to assume primary responsibility for occupational health and safety programs by establishing Internal Responsibility Systems. Auditing the performance of the Internal Responsibility Systems is becoming a major function of the inspection procedure. A positive response by employers and employees in assuming responsibility for internal control of hazards will gradually reduce the inspection role of the Branch.

The frequency of visits to a particular workplace varies depending on the risk; some workplaces are visited every three months. Before an inspection, branch officials meet with employers and employees to discuss their concerns and offer advice on possible solutions. If contravention of the legislation is found during the inspection, a corrective action is ordered in the form of a direction. Following the inspection, the officer discusses his or her report with the employers and employees, identifies other potential hazards, recommends preventive action and, generally, assists employers and employees to implement an effective self-inspection and self-compliance program.

The Branch conducts health surveys of industrial establishments in co-operation with the Occupational Health Branch.

Mining Health and Safety Branch

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**Peter McCrodan, P.Eng.
Director**

Workers in the mining industry are frequently exposed to certain hazards unique to the industry, along with the usual industrial hazards. Falling rocks, subsidence, drilling and blasting operations requiring heavy equipment and explosives, haulage of rock, working on unsteady or slippery ground, noise, vibrations, dust, radiation, diesel-engine emissions and other contaminants, may be encountered at any time by a miner.

In addition to the Internal Responsibility Systems, audits, inspections, investigations and pre-development reviews as described for the other two line branches, the Mining Health and Safety Branch consults with the mining industry and assists them to develop Codes of Practice to identify and rectify both known and potentially hazardous conditions and to promote safe work practices. Subjects presently under review include the control and confinement of dusts, ventilation in mine work areas, auxiliary lighting for remote areas, fueling, operation and maintenance of diesel engines, and work processes employing toxic substances.

In co-operation with the mining companies the Branch provides administrative support and professional expertise for the Mine Rescue Program. The program is funded by the mining industry through an assessment levied by the Workmen's Compensation Board.

Together with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the Branch has developed training programs in safe work practices for employers and supervisory staff. By improving their qualifications and learning to interpret and cope with hazards, workers prepare for assignments as worker representatives.

Occupational Health Branch

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**Hugh Nelson, P.Eng.
Director**

The purpose of the Occupational Health Branch is to protect the health of workers from exposure to biological, chemical and physical agents such as enzymes, emissions from equipment, silica and asbestos dust, noise and vibration. The various services of the Branch provide consultation on recognition, evaluation and control of workers' exposure to these hazards, and assist in the development of health standards. The Branch provides advice and training on a variety of work-related health problems.

The Occupational Health Medical Service provides medical consultation and guidance to all personnel concerned with occupational health. Consulting services are provided to the other branches of the Occupational Health and Safety Division, the Workmen's Compensation Board, the Ontario Provincial Police, hospitals, Poison Control Centres, Medical Officers of Health, industrial and private physicians, management and workers. The services include audits of workplaces and medical surveillance programs, especially in establishments using toxic substances such as lead, mercury, silica and asbestos; remedial emergency services to the Ontario Provincial Police in cases of accidental exposure to toxic chemicals; provision of toxicological information and assistance in courses for health and safety professionals.

The Nursing Consultant Program provides advice on preventive health care programs for workers, management and safety professionals. Registered nurses entering the occupational health and safety field may take orientation courses under the program.

The Industrial Chest Disease Service sends mobile clinics to various industries to provide chest x-rays and pulmonary function tests. Pre-employment screening for particular exposures is given, to determine susceptibility to diseases inherent in the job. The clinics conduct surveillance programs of workers exposed to silica, asbestos, talc,

beryllium, uranium and some toxic chemicals. If a worker develops a work-related chest disease, the clinics assess the impairment to the worker's health.

The Occupational Health Engineering Service conducts industrial hygiene field visits to investigate conditions and identify actual or potential hazards and measures airborne noxious contaminants to which workers may be exposed. Routine monitoring of workers' exposure levels and control measures are carried out. The service advises on educational and technical matters to various universities and colleges and provides input to development of standards and regulations related to the field of industrial hygiene.

The Occupational Health Laboratory Service functions as a support service to the occupational, medical, engineering, air quality assessment and inspection activities performed by government agencies and industrial establishments. Analyses are made of blood and urine samples of workers who may have been exposed to hazardous substances. Materials and air samples are identified, and advice given on the monitoring of people who have been exposed to toxic substances.

Special Studies and Services Branch

Max Fitch, M.D.

Director

The Special Studies and Services Branch is primarily concerned in programs to prevent illness and injury. One of its major activities is to provide protection from ionizing and non-ionizing radiation, in the form of x-rays, gases in uranium mines, nuclear generating stations, radioactive materials and equipment used in medicine and research (ionizing) and microwaves, lasers and ultra-violet devices (non-ionizing). New measurement techniques, methods of testing and information on usage and exposure are continually under review and development. The Radiation Protection Laboratory provides radio-analytical services for uranium mines, mills and processing plants, nuclear reactors and users of radioactive isotopes.

The Branch undertakes special studies, both short- and long-term, to determine the effects of biological, chemical and physical agents on the health of workers and the relationship of injuries to work schedules, equipment and environmental factors. The information gathered during the studies may be used in the development of prevention programs, guidelines and regulated standards.

Medical services and research are provided to other Ministries, especially to the Ministry of Environment.

Standards and Programs Branch

Robb Ogilvie **Director**

The Branch objective is to assist the operating line branches in the development, implementation and evaluation of occupational health and safety policies and programs. Four program groups work to achieve these objectives.

The Program Analysis and Evaluation Section co-ordinates the development of short- and long-range objectives, goals, plans and priorities of the Division. The group monitors and reports on overall progress of the implementation of plans, reviews and recommends adjustments to overall plans and evaluates results. It also handles the data preparation of all inspection reports and lost time injury reports for automated data processing.

Hazard Identification and Programming is a multi-disciplinary group of professionals who co-ordinate development and implementation of Action Plans for specific occupational health and safety hazards and provide legislative standards, guidelines, fact sheets and codes of practice.

The intent is to increase the Division's emphasis on a co-ordinated basis, on priority occupational health and safety hazards and to complement the normal, on-going inspection programs which deal with the entire spectrum of hazards.

Industry Sector Programming consists of three teams (an Industrial Health and Safety, Construction Health and Safety and Mining Health and Safety team) to support the operating line branches

directly in the development and maintenance of operating policies and procedures for their field staff, co-ordinate the development and implementation of occupational health and safety training programs, operation planning and operating information systems. The teams are responsible for reviewing consistency in approaches between branches and identifying gaps or duplications.

The Advisory Service on Occupational Health and Safety co-ordinates the development and distribution of information on occupational health and safety programs, guidelines, data sheets and Codes of Practice; maintains newsletters and client mailing lists; services a province-wide telephone information system; assesses and recommends information needs and sets up working relationships with other organizations involved in occupational health and safety. This group also provides secretariat, policy and administrative support to the Provincial Lottery Funding Awards Program for occupational health and safety projects.

The Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety

The Advisory Council combines some of the former functions of the Labour Safety Council and the Advisory Council on Occupational and Environmental Health. It consists of 20 members – six labour, six management and six from the public-at-large, a chairman and a vice-chairman.

The Council advises the Government, through the Minister of Labour, on matters relating to occupational health and occupational safety, making recommendations on matters referred to it by the Minister and others.

It advises the Provincial Government on standards and programs related to occupational health or safety hazards and makes recommendations regarding the detection and prediction of hazards.

Where there are no formal health and safety programs, the Council recommends actions that might be taken.

Lottery Funding Committees

On January 19, 1977, Cabinet approved the recommendation that \$5 million of the initial \$25 million from the Provincial Lottery go to the Ministry of Labour for occupational health and safety. The funds are to be used to foster and support manpower training and development of occupational health and safety specialists and research projects on practical problems in occupational health and safety. The Ministry has established an Advisory Committee and two awards committees, one for Manpower Training and Development and one for Applied Research.

The awards committees review applications for funding and forward recommendations to the Advisory Committee for review and recommendation to the Minister.

To date, grants have been awarded to individuals for specific training in occupational health and safety; to the Ontario Federation of Labour in training instructors and health and safety committee members; to universities for the establishment of a network of resource centres and courses in occupational health and safety and to the research community for specific projects related to priority hazard areas.

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Mining Health and Safety Branch

(416) 965-1328

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Special Studies and Services Branch

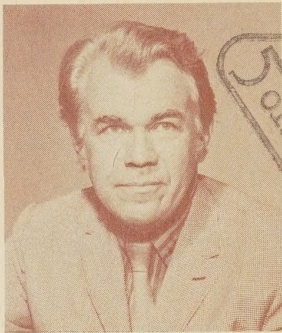
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Standards and Programs Branch

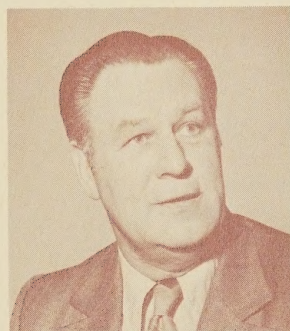
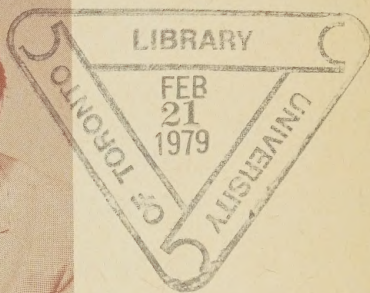
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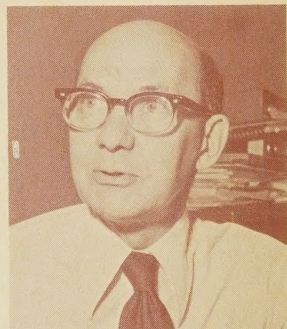
Keith Cleverdon



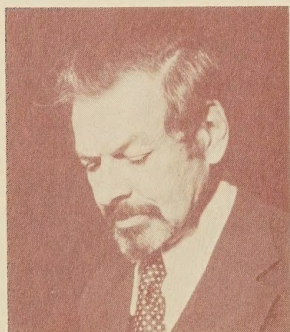
Jim McNair



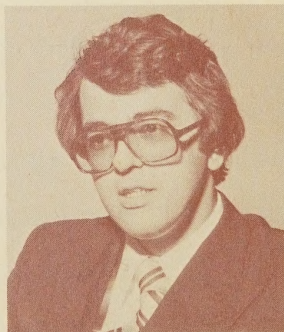
Peter McCroan



Hugh Nelson



Max Fitch



Robb Ogilvie

To meet the challenges presented by and implicit in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Health and Safety of Workers in Mines, the Occupational Health and Safety Division has been provided with a clear mandate.

“To promote a healthy and safe occupational environment in the Ontario workplace and to enlist the collective co-operation of management and labour toward the achievement of this objective.”

The Division has committed its resources to fulfill this mandate. And with the commitment of both employers and employees, not only to the letter of the law but to its spirit and purpose, Ontario can lead the world in Occupational Health and Safety.

C. Rodney May
Assistant Deputy Minister

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